

**MARVEL**

523

WAID  
WIERINGO  
KESEL

*THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!*

# Fantastic Four

**RISING  
STORM**  
PART 4 of 4



RWG!  
KESEL  
ISANOVE



# THE FANTASTIC FOUR

**4** A team—and a family—of adventurers, explorers and imagonauts, the Fantastic Four lead lives both ordinary—and extraordinary. As of today:

**3** In a failed attempt to protect them from the world-eating cosmic menace known as Galactus, Reed Richards hastily constructed a device which swapped Johnny's Human Torch abilities with those of his sister, the Invisible Woman.

**2** Johnny, inspired by the similarity of Galactus's origin to the FF's, helped rebuild the device on a unique, never-to-be-repeated scale, allowing Reed to briefly strip Galactus of his five-billion-year-old cosmic power...

**1** ...leaving behind a ticking time bomb known only as Galen.



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**PART  
4 of 4**

STAN LEE PRESENTS  
**RISING STORM**



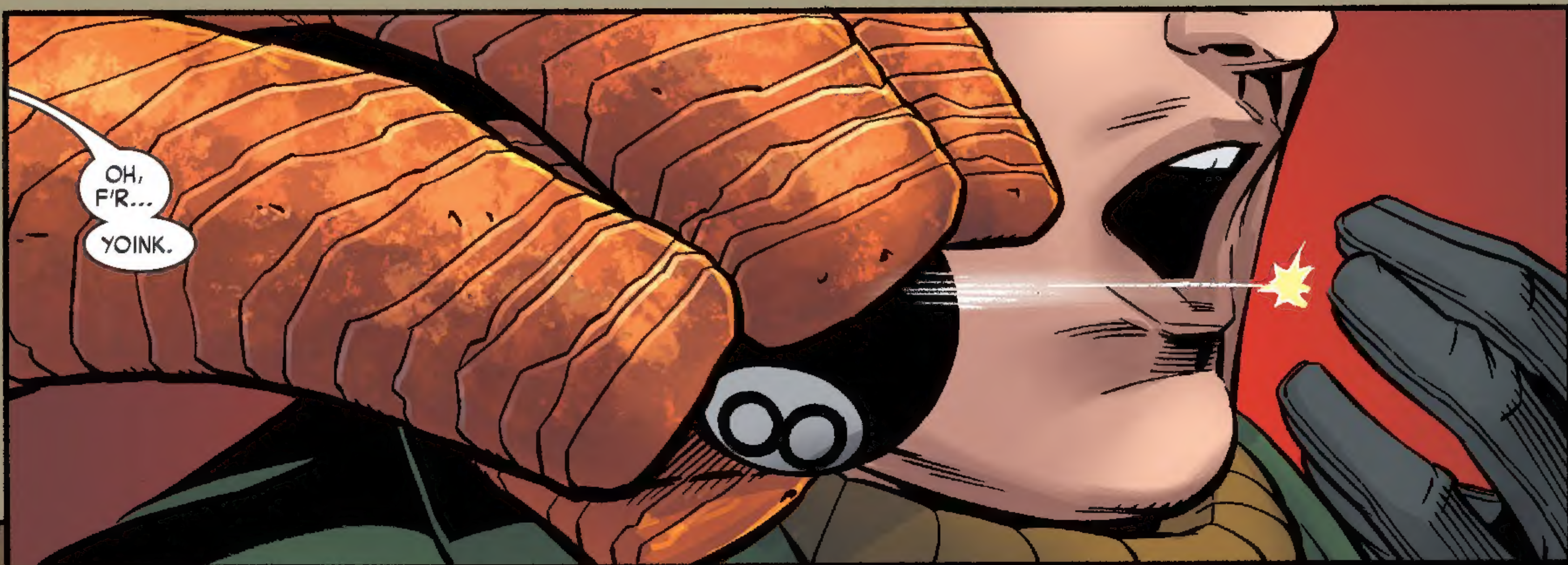
"MAKE NO MISTAKE.  
THE ESSENCE OF  
GALACTUS STILL  
EXISTS. THE UNIVERSE  
IS NOT OUT OF  
DANGER, AND ENTIRE  
PLANETS ARE  
STILL IN PERIL.

"GALACTUS MAY,  
FOR THE MOMENT,  
NO LONGER BE THE  
GREAT DEVOURER OF  
INNOCENT WORLDS--

"--BUT HIS  
HUNGER  
REMAINS  
INSATIABLE."















AIN'T THAT RIGHT,  
LURLEEN?

MAN, I  
WISH I'D STOP  
HAVIN' THESE  
BLACKOUTS.

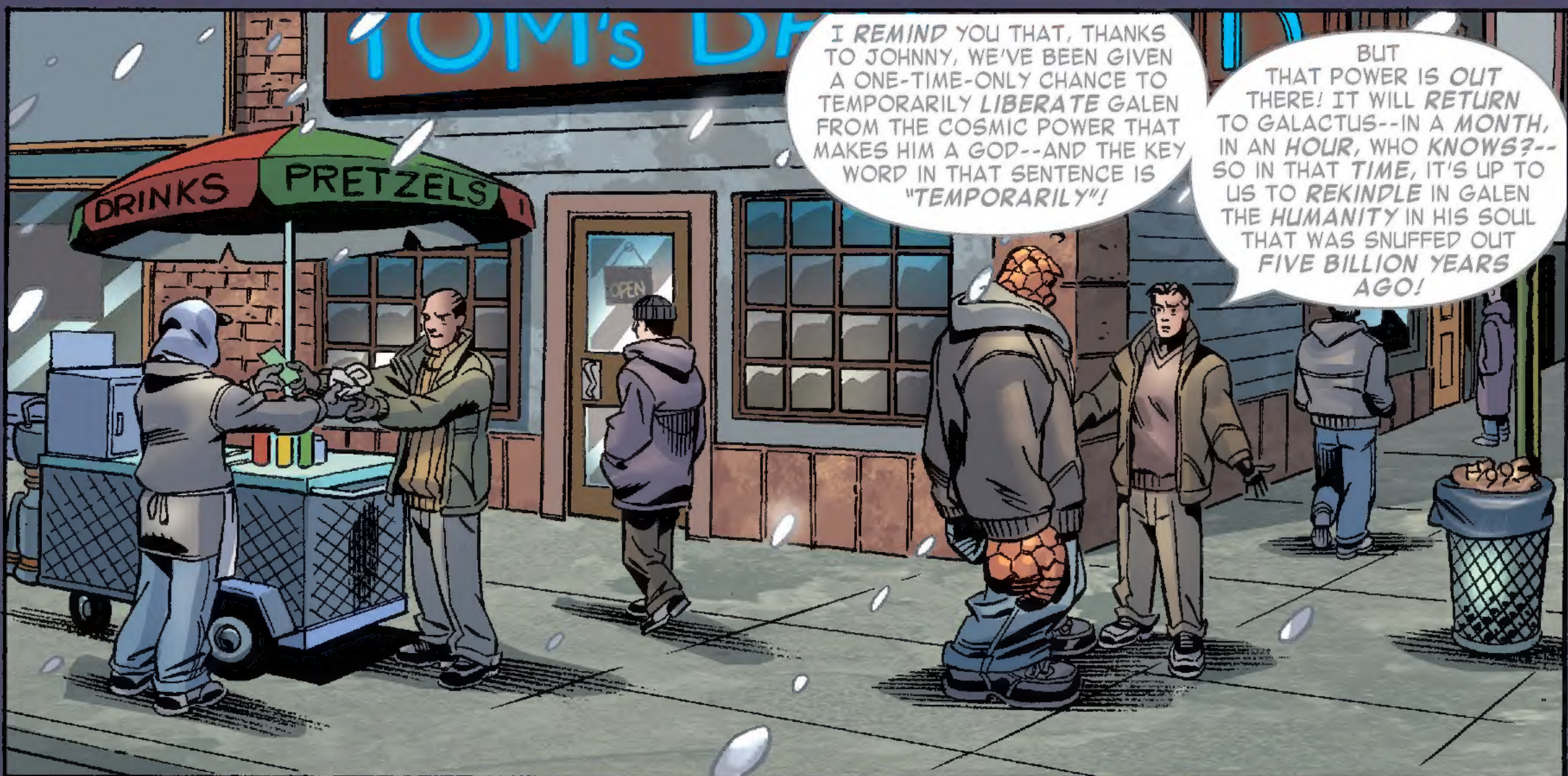
SEE?



HANG ON! HANG ON!  
I B' LIEVE I CHECKED  
MY CHAPEAU!

THING,  
I'VE BEEN LOOKING  
EVERYWHERE FOR YOU!  
I DON'T HAVE THE  
PATIENCE FOR YOUR  
FOOLISHNESS!

GEEZ,  
YA ARE PEEVED.  
Y'ONLY CALL ME  
"THING" WHEN  
YER MAD.



I REMIND YOU THAT, THANKS  
TO JOHNNY, WE'VE BEEN GIVEN  
A ONE-TIME-ONLY CHANCE TO  
TEMPORARILY *LIBERATE* GALEN  
FROM THE COSMIC POWER THAT  
MAKES HIM A GOD--AND THE KEY  
WORD IN THAT SENTENCE IS  
"*TEMPORARILY*"!

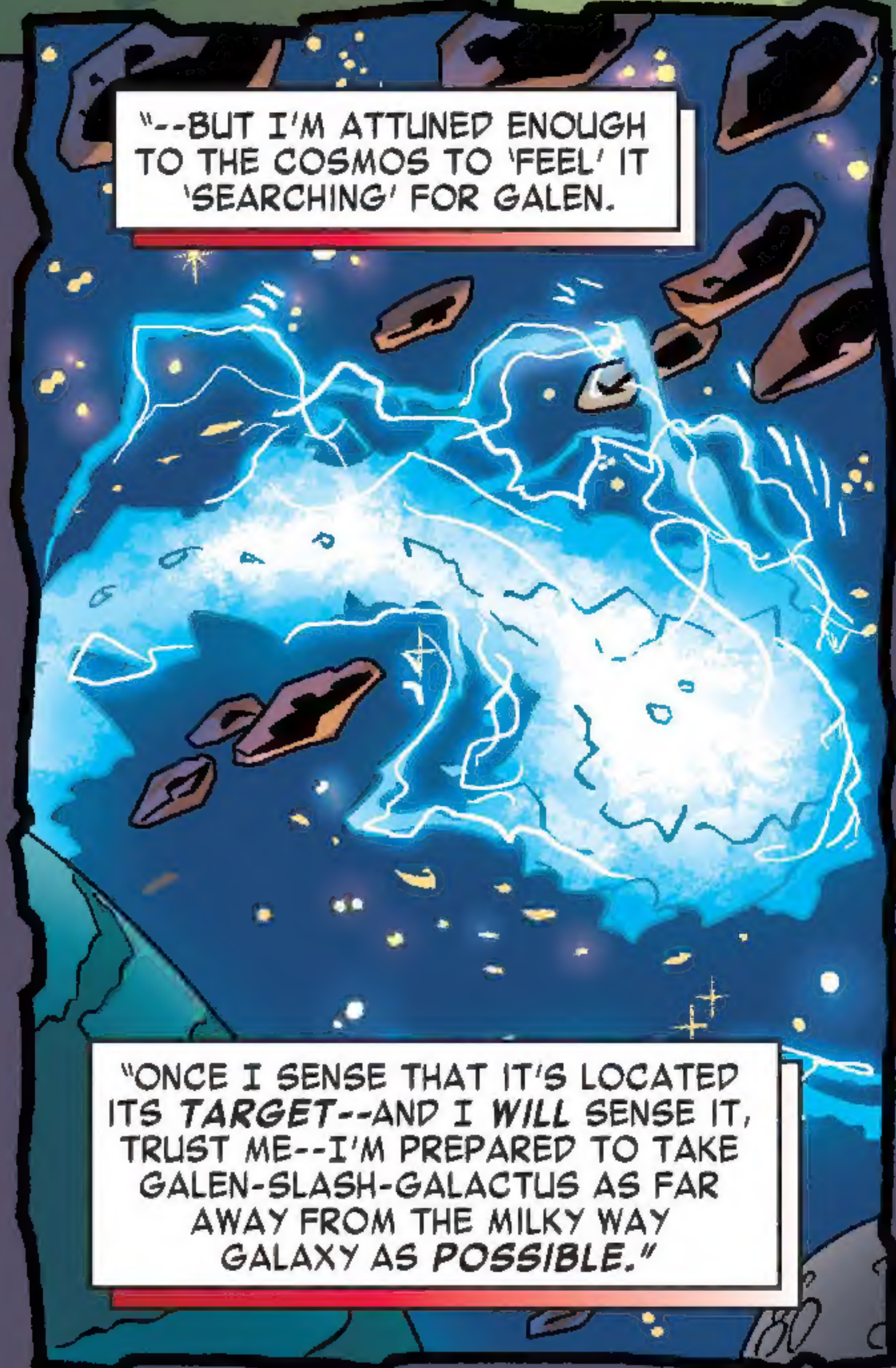
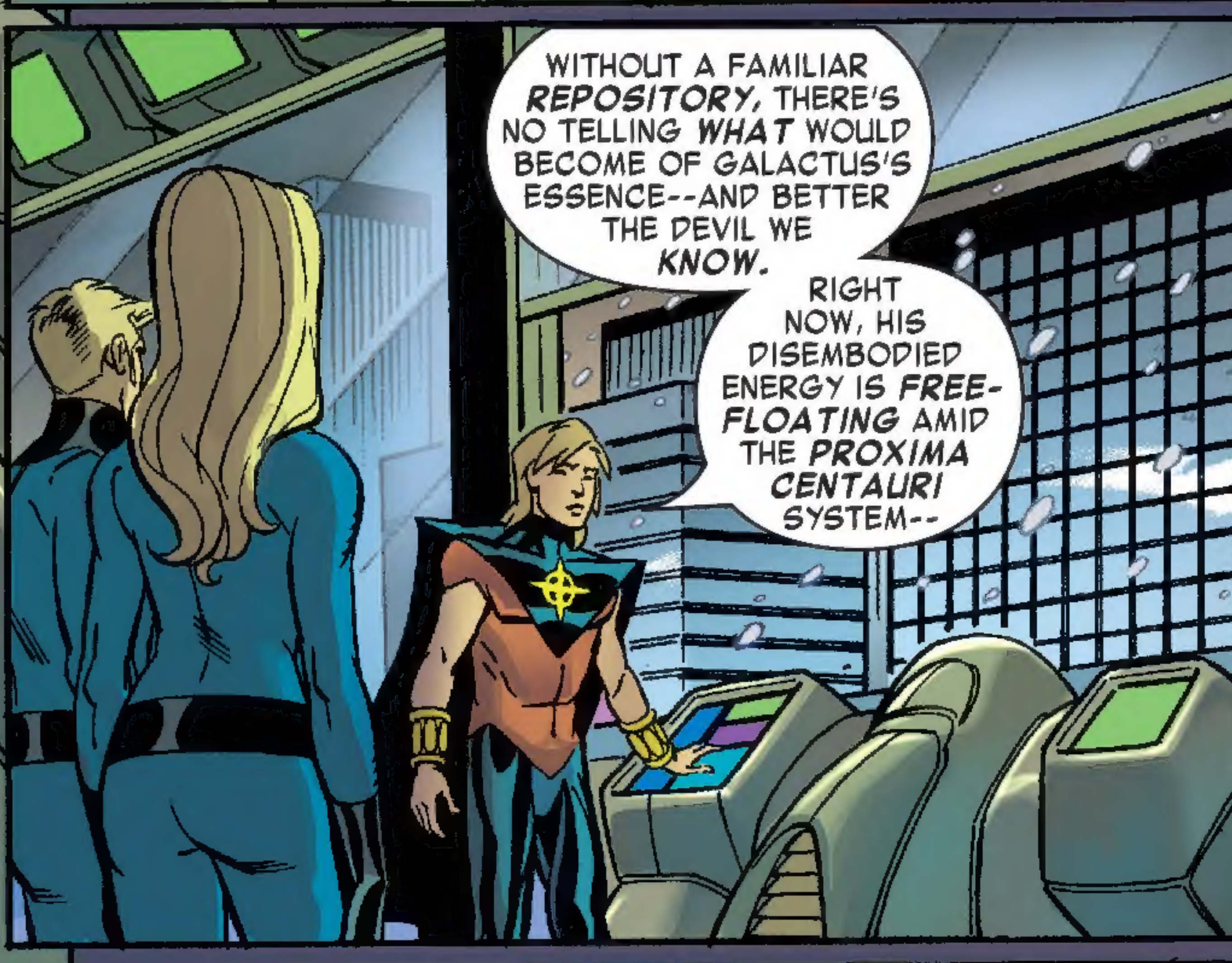
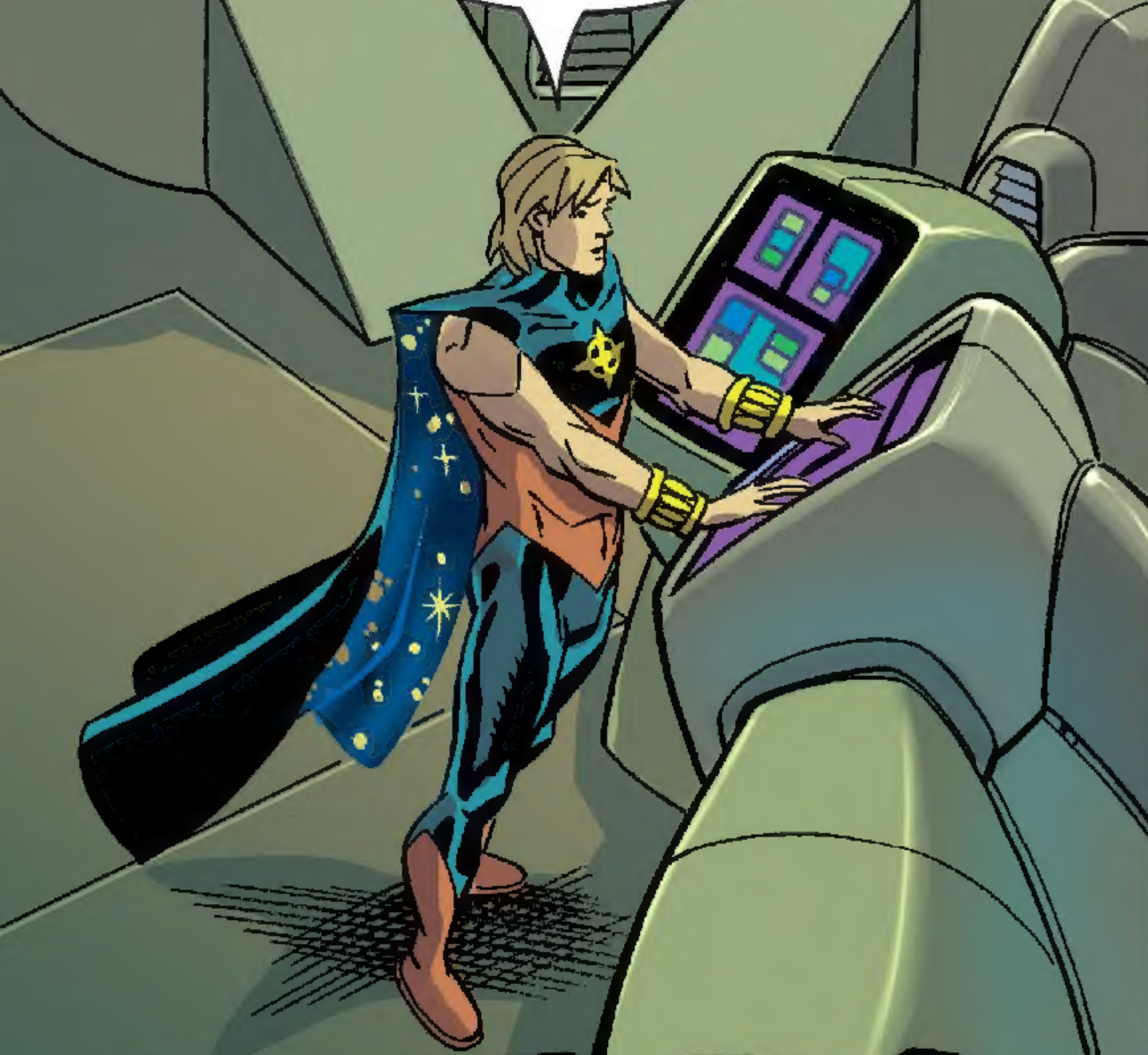
BUT  
THAT POWER IS OUT  
THERE! IT WILL RETURN  
TO GALACTUS--IN A MONTH,  
IN AN HOUR, WHO KNOWS?--  
SO IN THAT TIME, IT'S UP TO  
US TO *REKINDLE* IN GALEN  
THE *HUMANITY* IN HIS SOUL  
THAT WAS SNUFFED OUT  
FIVE BILLION YEARS  
AGO!



IT'S A  
SLIM HOPE, BUT  
PERHAPS--JUST  
PERHAPS--WE CAN EXPOSE  
GALEN TO ENOUGH  
BEAUTY TO REAWAKEN  
HIS SENSE OF  
EMPATHY--

--SO THAT  
WHEN HE *DOES*  
BECOME GALACTUS  
AGAIN, HE'LL THINK *TWICE*  
BEFORE EXTERMINATING  
ENTIRE *RACES*  
WITH BARELY A  
NOTICE!







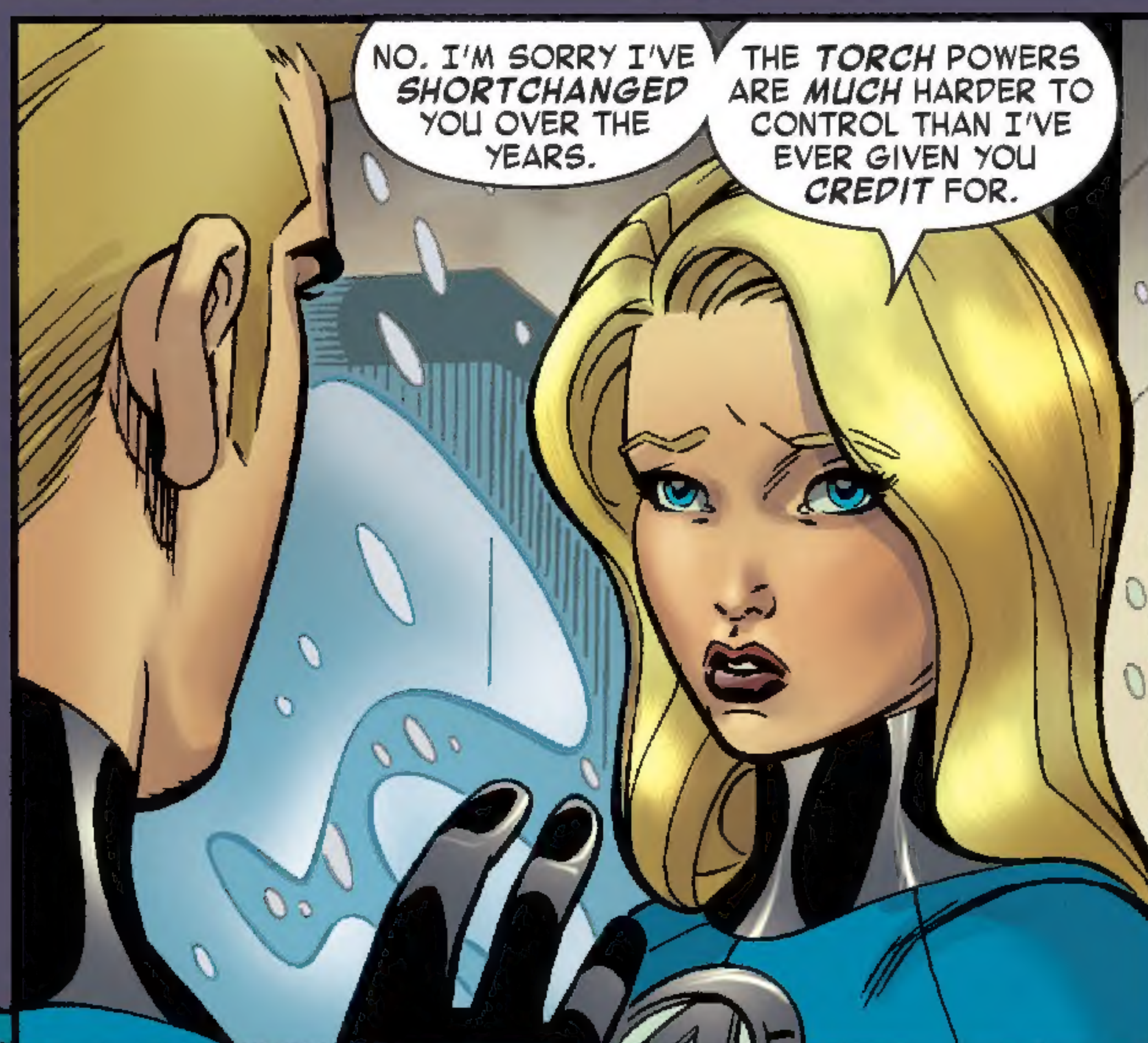


SAY, DO YOU MIND  
TURNING DOWN THE  
HEAT? I'M ROASTING  
IN HERE--

--AND I  
HAVEN'T ACTUALLY  
SWEATED IN, LIKE,  
FOREVER.

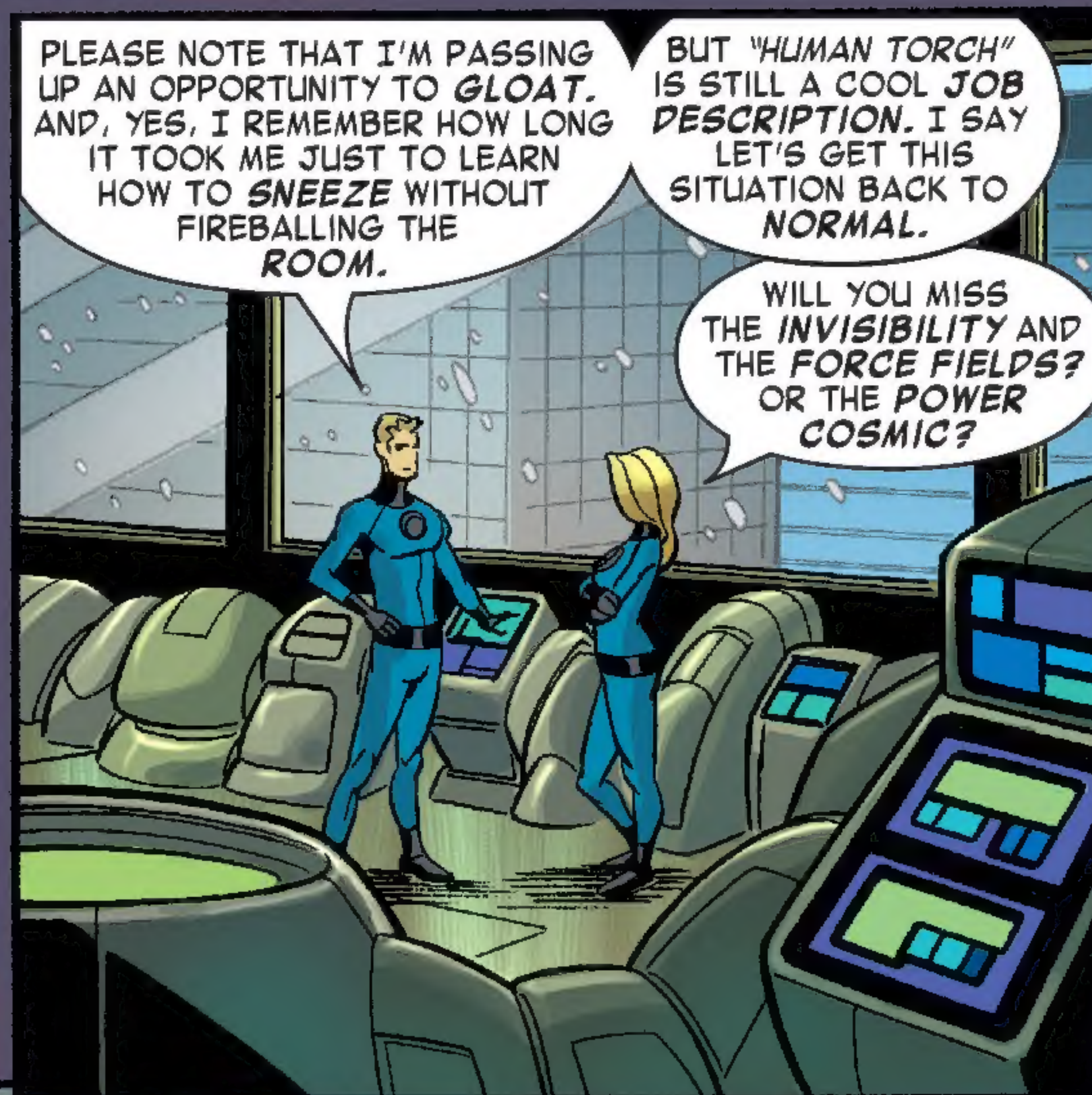
I'M  
SORRY.

NO PROB.  
I CAN PUT  
UP A FORCE-  
FIELD.



NO. I'M SORRY I'VE  
SHORTCHANGED  
YOU OVER THE  
YEARS.

THE TORCH POWERS  
ARE MUCH HARDER TO  
CONTROL THAN I'VE  
EVER GIVEN YOU  
CREDIT FOR.



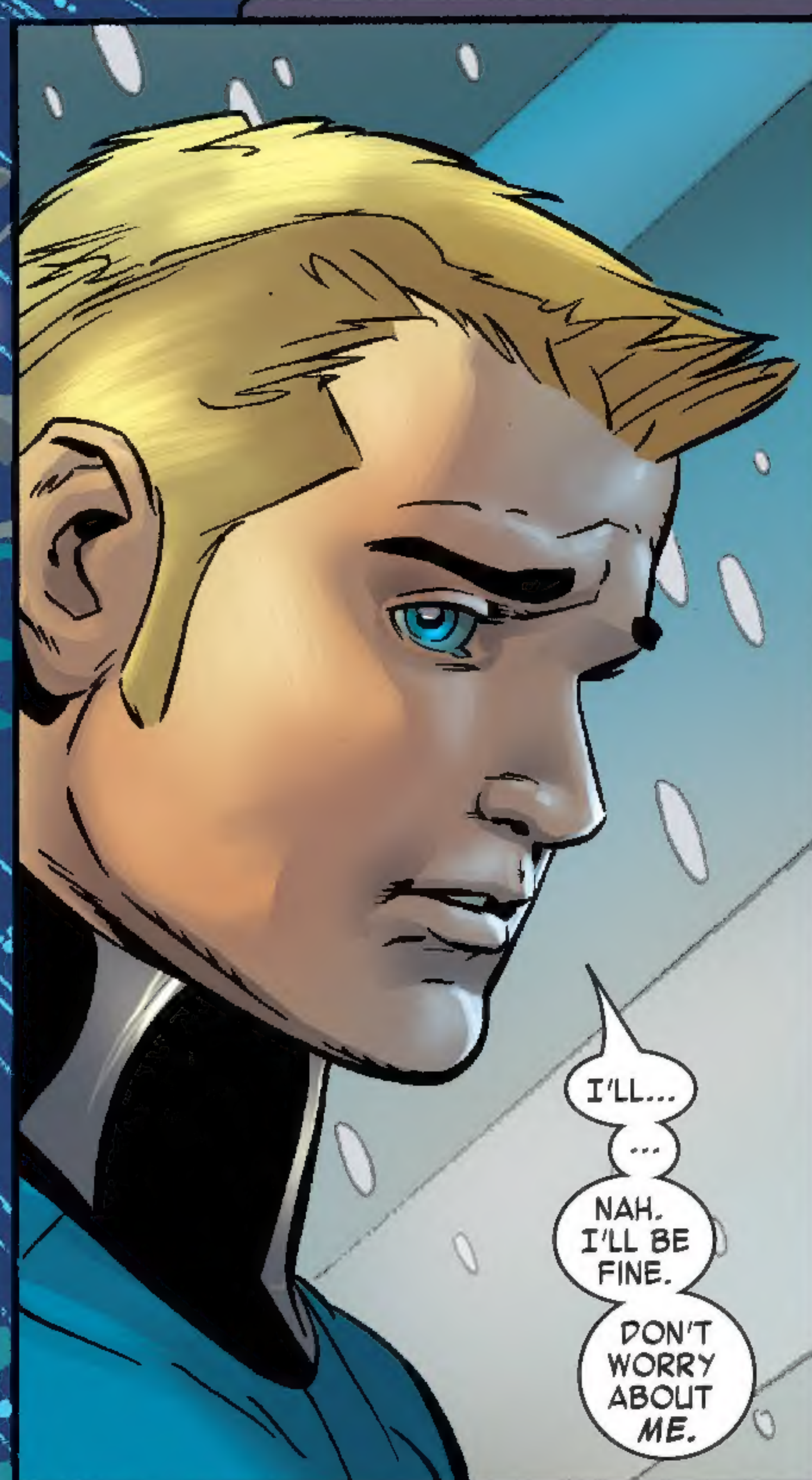
PLEASE NOTE THAT I'M PASSING  
UP AN OPPORTUNITY TO GLOAT.  
AND, YES, I REMEMBER HOW LONG  
IT TOOK ME JUST TO LEARN  
HOW TO SNEEZE WITHOUT  
FIREBALLING THE  
ROOM.

BUT "HUMAN TORCH"  
IS STILL A COOL JOB  
DESCRIPTION. I SAY  
LET'S GET THIS  
SITUATION BACK TO  
NORMAL.

WILL YOU MISS  
THE INVISIBILITY AND  
THE FORCE FIELDS?  
OR THE POWER  
COSMIC?



COOL....!



I'LL....

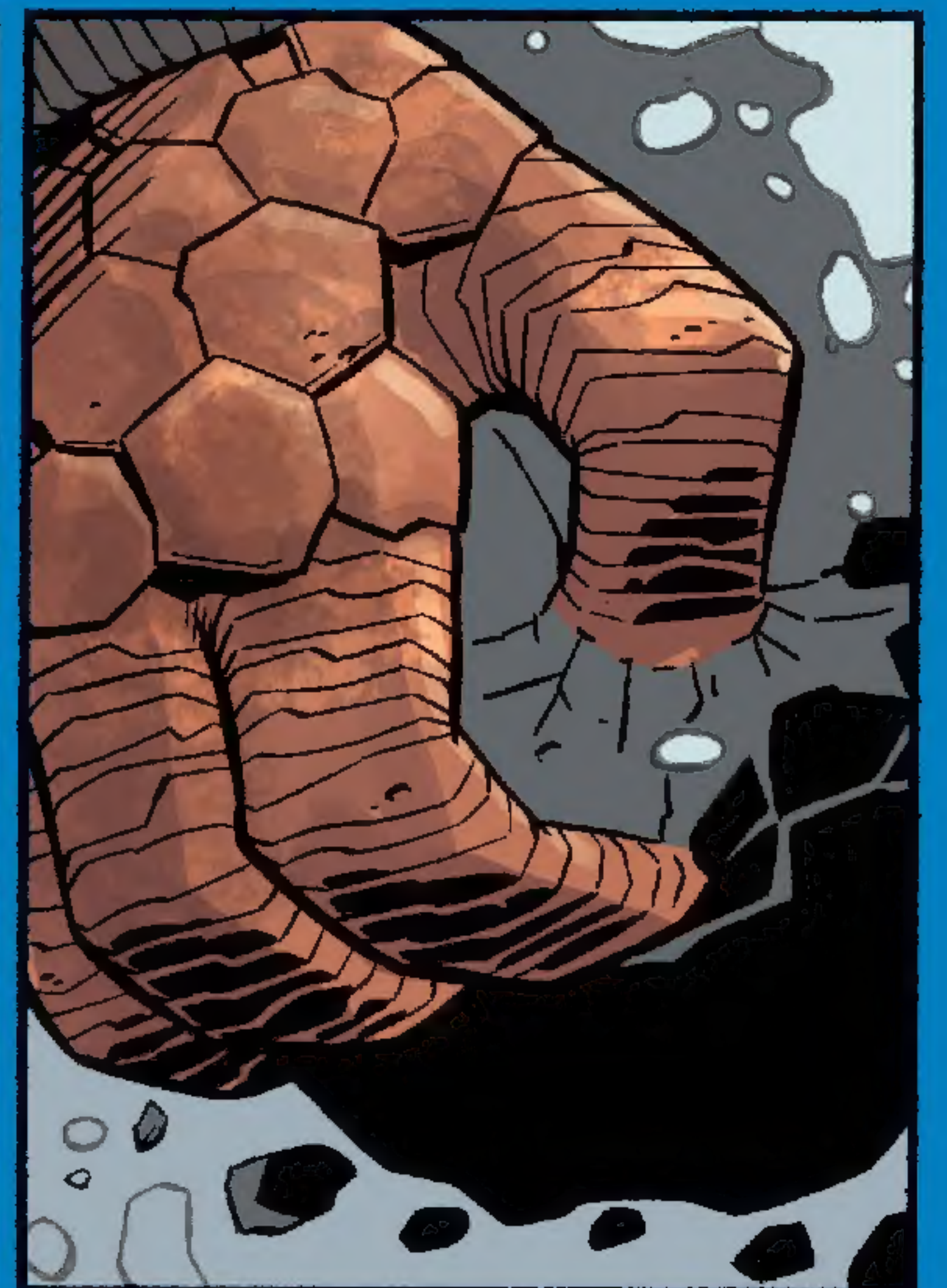
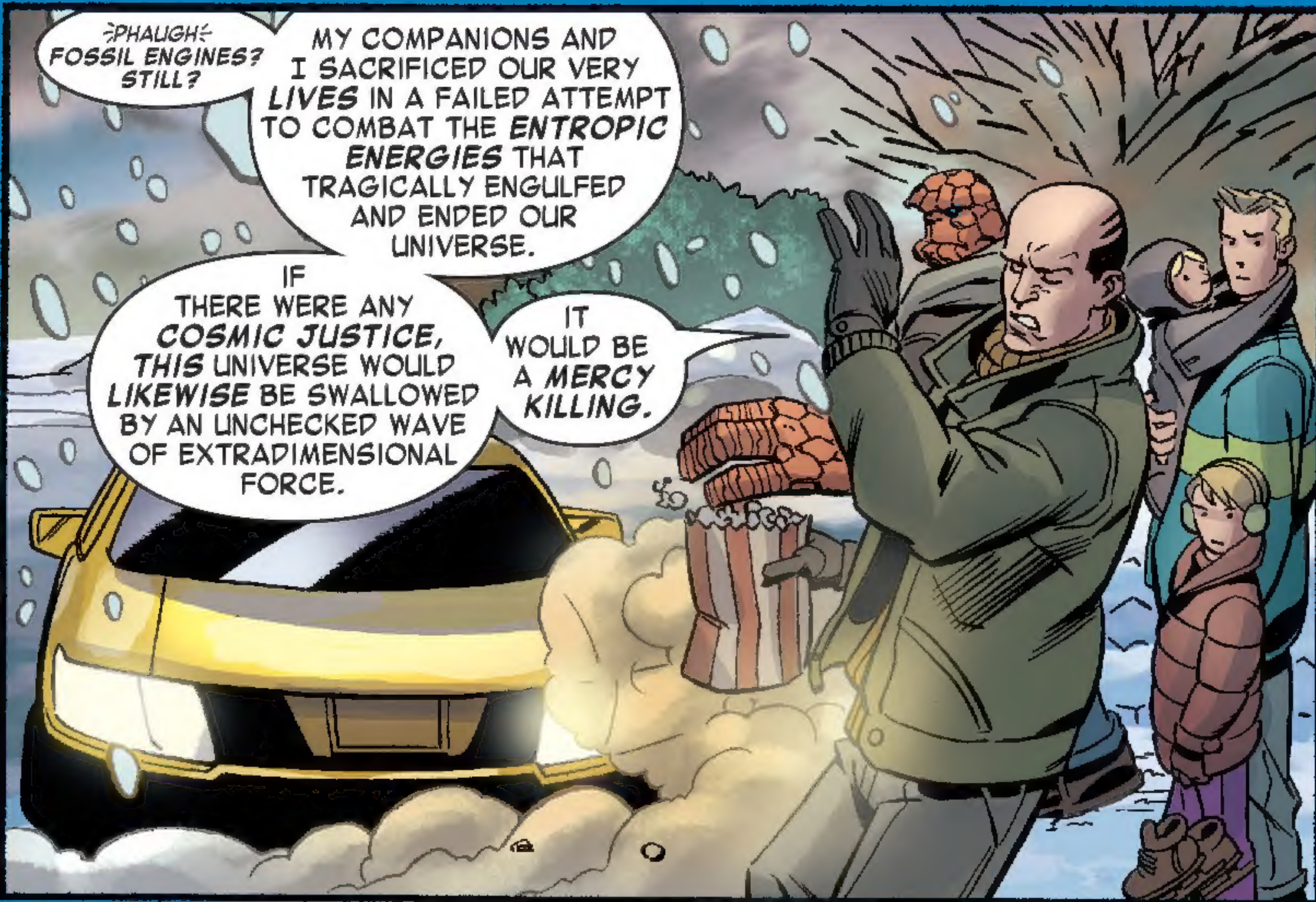
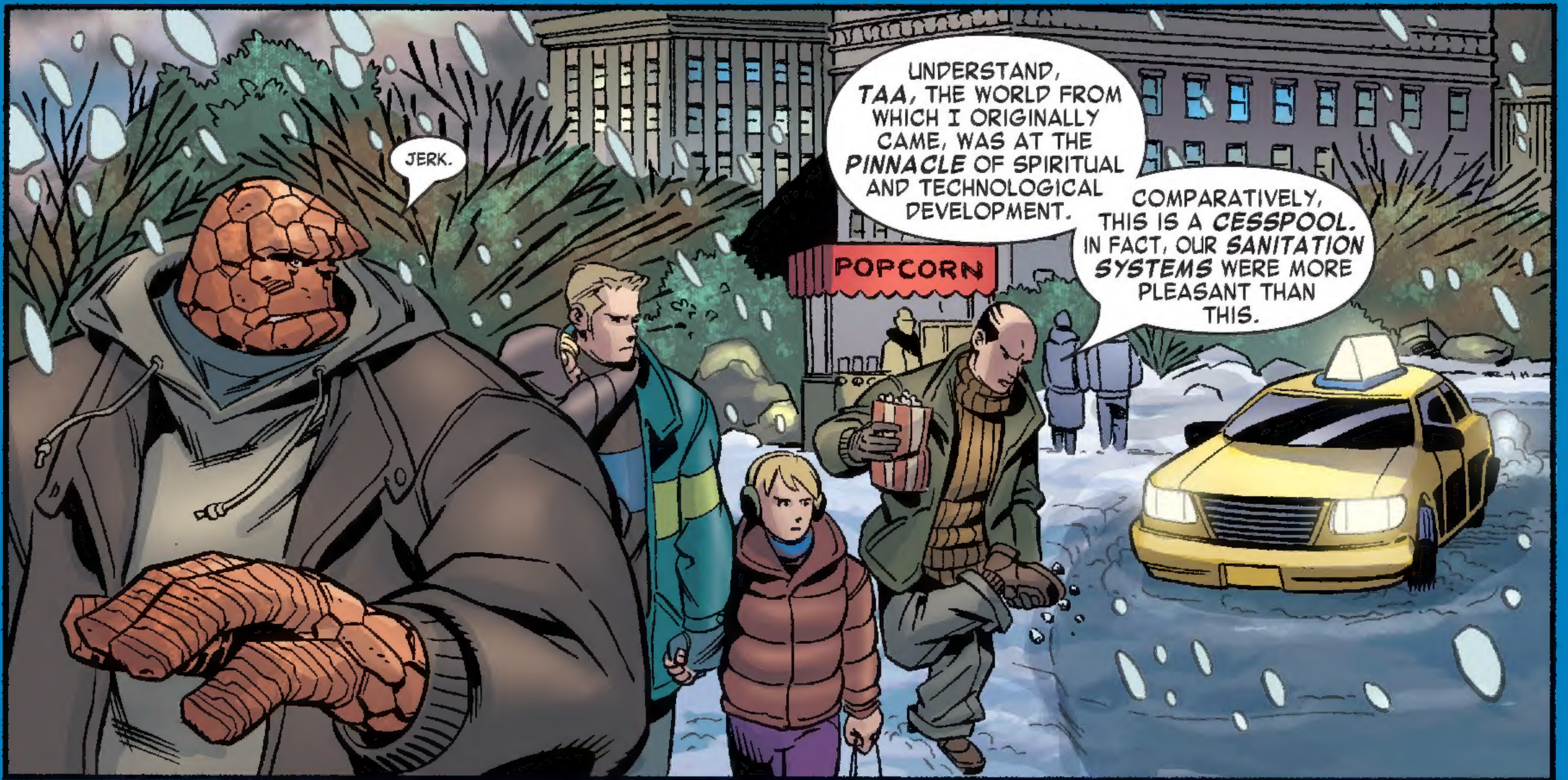
NAH.  
I'LL BE  
FINE.

DON'T  
WORRY  
ABOUT  
ME.

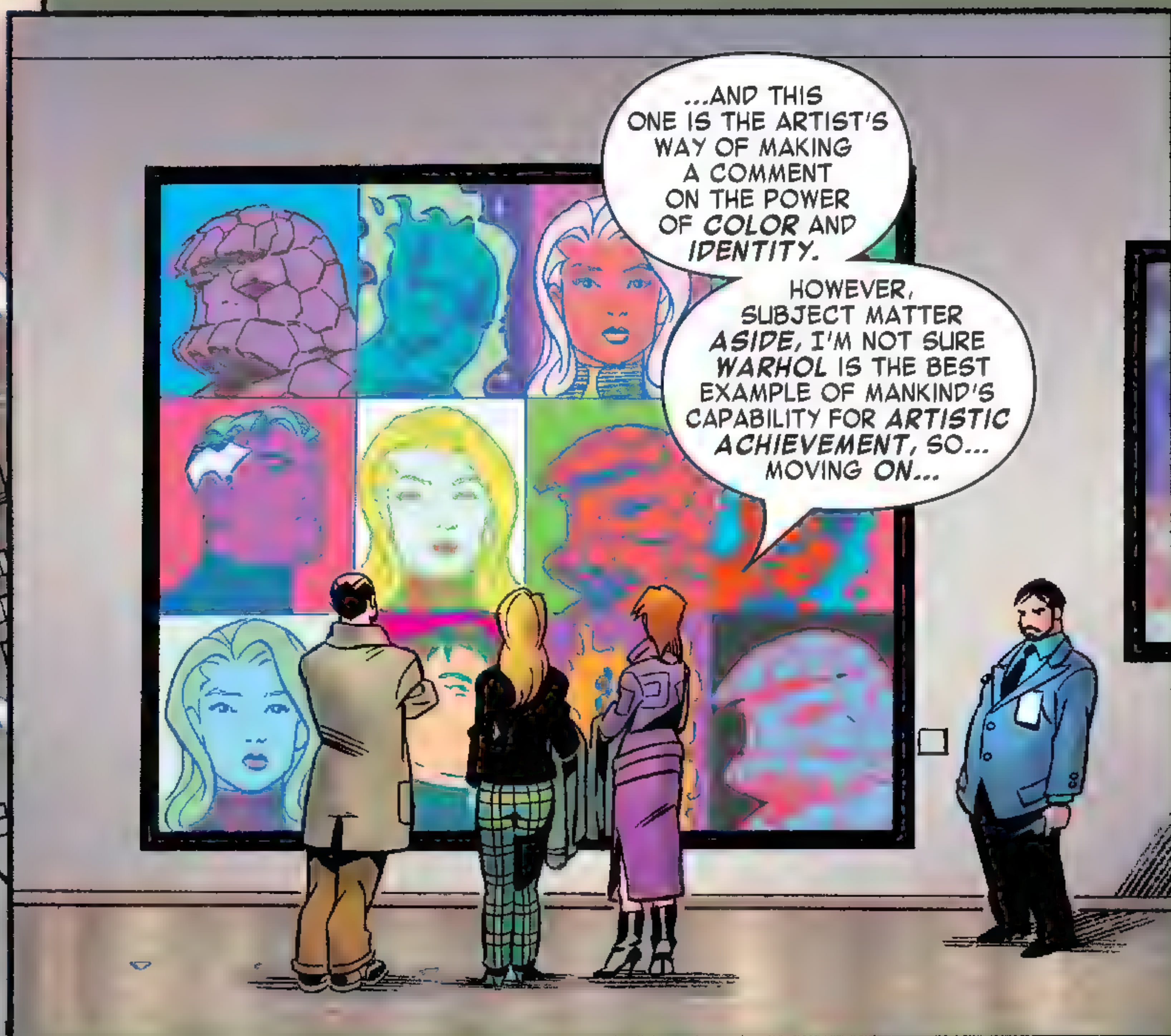












...AND THIS ONE IS THE ARTIST'S WAY OF MAKING A COMMENT ON THE POWER OF COLOR AND IDENTITY.

HOWEVER, SUBJECT MATTER ASIDE, I'M NOT SURE WARHOL IS THE BEST EXAMPLE OF MANKIND'S CAPABILITY FOR ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT, SO... MOVING ON...



NOT SO FAST, SIR, THERE IS NO EATING IN THE GUGGENHEIM!

IS THAT YOU, HENRY? WE GOT SPECIAL PERMISSION. IT'S ALL RIGHT.



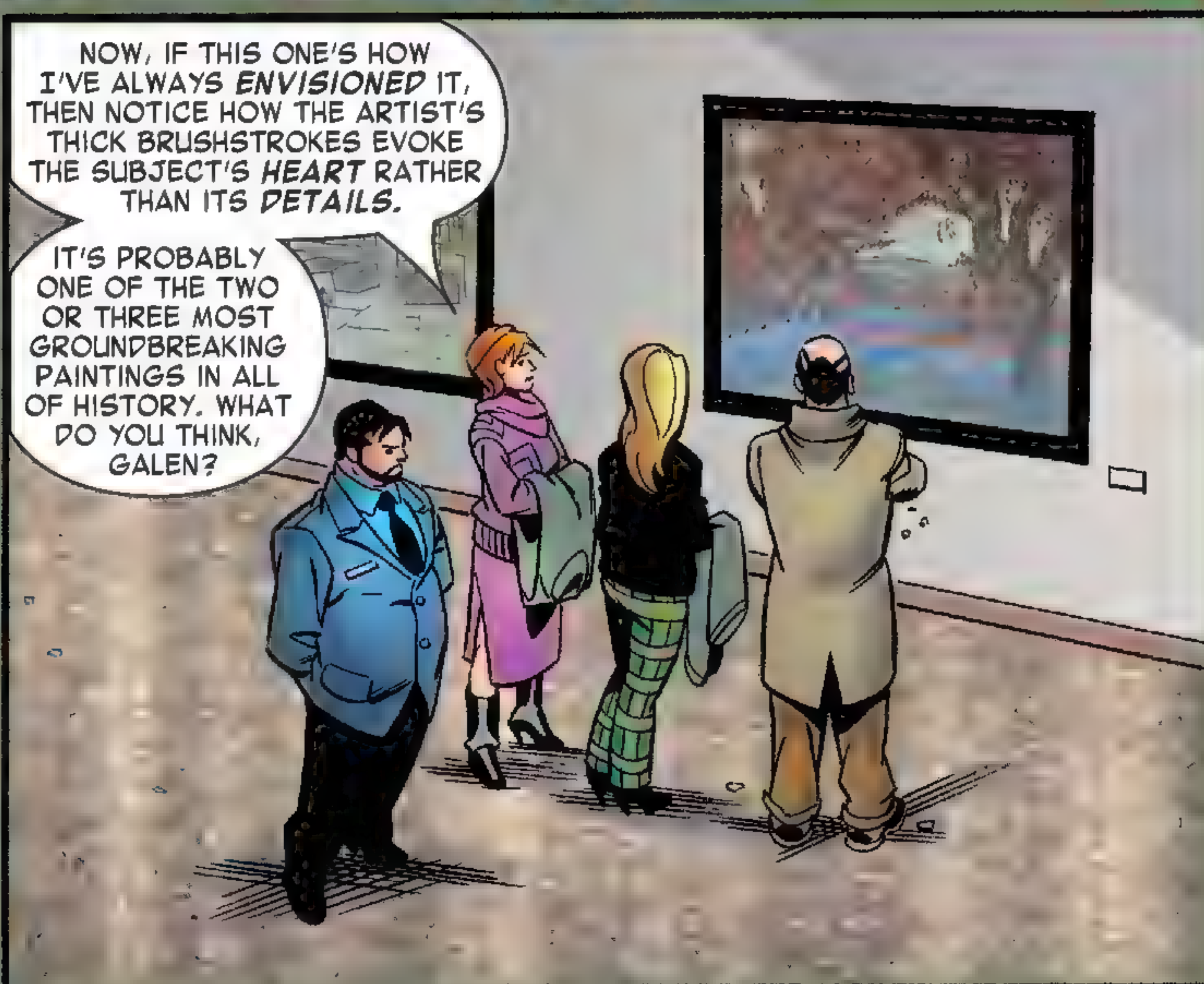
OH! HELLO, ALICIA--I MEAN, MISS MASTERS! ARE YOU HERE TO SEE THE--

--I--I MEAN, THERE'S A VIEWING OF--

--AW, GEEZ--I MEAN--

IT'S FINE, HENRY. BUT I BET THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE IS PRICELESS.

HOW ABOUT LEADING A BLIND GIRL OVER TO THE IMPRESSIONISTS?



NOW, IF THIS ONE'S HOW I'VE ALWAYS ENVISIONED IT, THEN NOTICE HOW THE ARTIST'S THICK BRUSHSTROKES EVOKE THE SUBJECT'S HEART RATHER THAN ITS DETAILS.

IT'S PROBABLY ONE OF THE TWO OR THREE MOST GROUNDBREAKING PAINTINGS IN ALL OF HISTORY. WHAT DO YOU THINK, GALEN?



IT'S...PEDESTRIAN  
WORK. RATHER  
UNREMARKABLE.

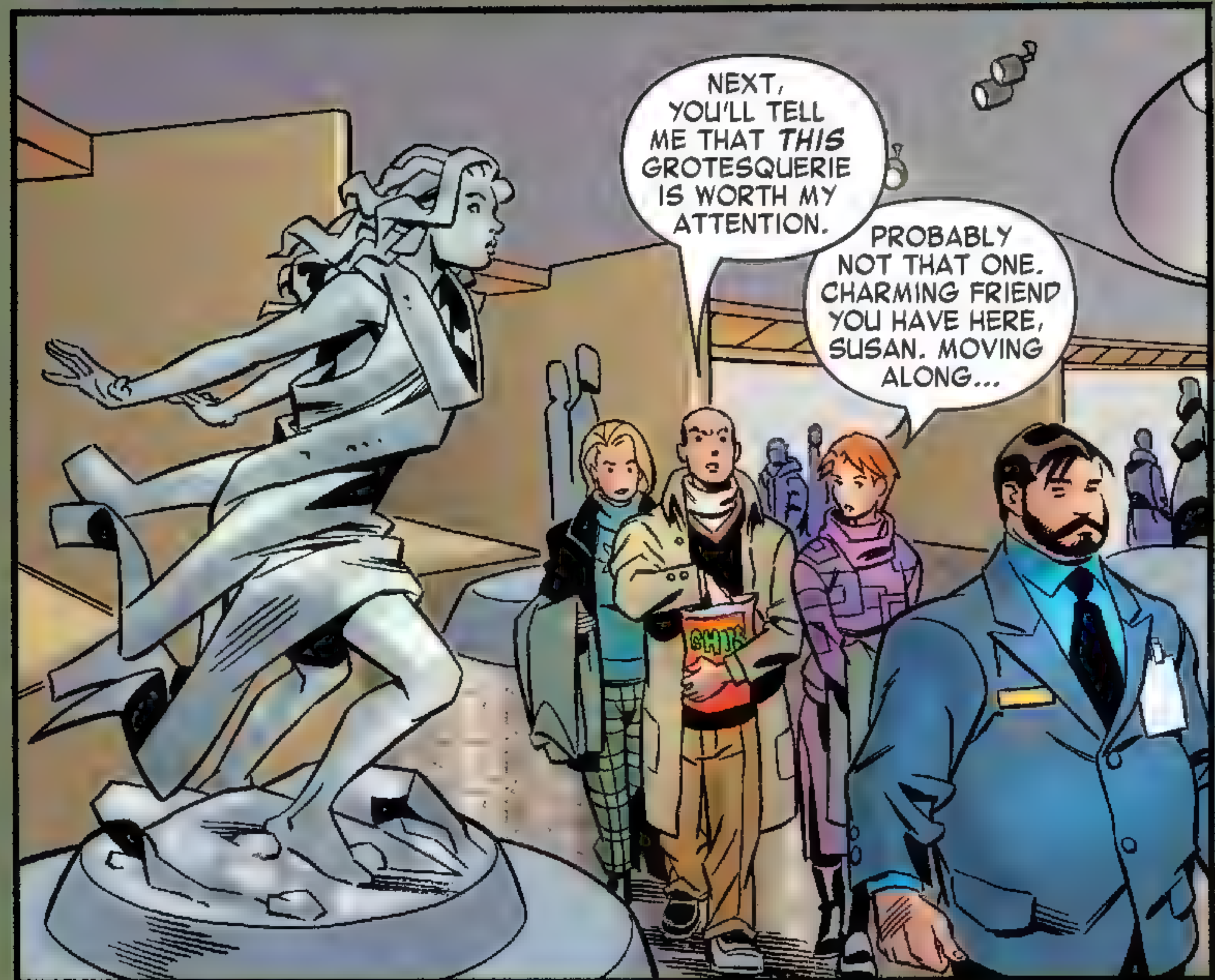
IF THIS IS THE BEST  
THE HUMAN RACE CAN  
EXPRESS ITSELF...

...EH.  
NONETHELESS, I SUPPOSE  
YOU CAN BE EXCLUDED  
YOUR OPINION GIVEN  
YOUR OCULAR  
SHORTCOMINGS.



NEXT,  
YOU'LL TELL  
ME THAT *THIS*  
GROTESQUE  
IS WORTH MY  
ATTENTION.

PROBABLY  
NOT THAT ONE.  
CHARMING FRIEND  
YOU HAVE HERE,  
SUSAN. MOVING  
ALONG...



YOU'RE *PUSHING* IT, BUDDY. DID  
NO ONE EXPLAIN WHY ALICIA'S SO  
ELOQUENT ABOUT ART? GALEN, SHE'S  
ONE OF NORTH AMERICA'S  
MOST ACCOMPLISHED  
SCULPTORS.

THAT  
STATUE YOU  
JUST *INSULTED*,  
FOR EXAMPLE,  
IS HER PIECE.



REALLY? IF SHE'S BLIND,  
WHY WOULD SHE EVEN  
ATTEMPT SOMETHING  
LIKE THAT?

WHY WOULD  
SHE NOT SIMPLY  
SURRENDER  
HERSELF TO HER  
AFFLICTION?

YOU WOULDN'T  
UNDERSTAND.



THIS IS  
A CEZANNE. NOTICE  
HOW MUCH CAN BE  
SUGGESTED WITH SIMPLE  
FORMS AND COLOR PLANES.  
HIS TECHNIQUES FORMED THE  
FOUNDATION OF MODERN PAINTING...





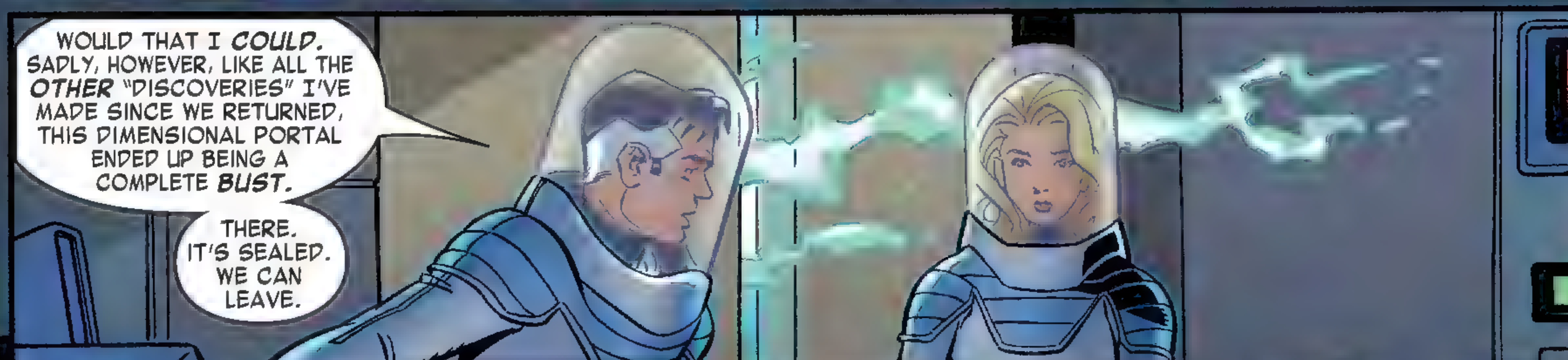
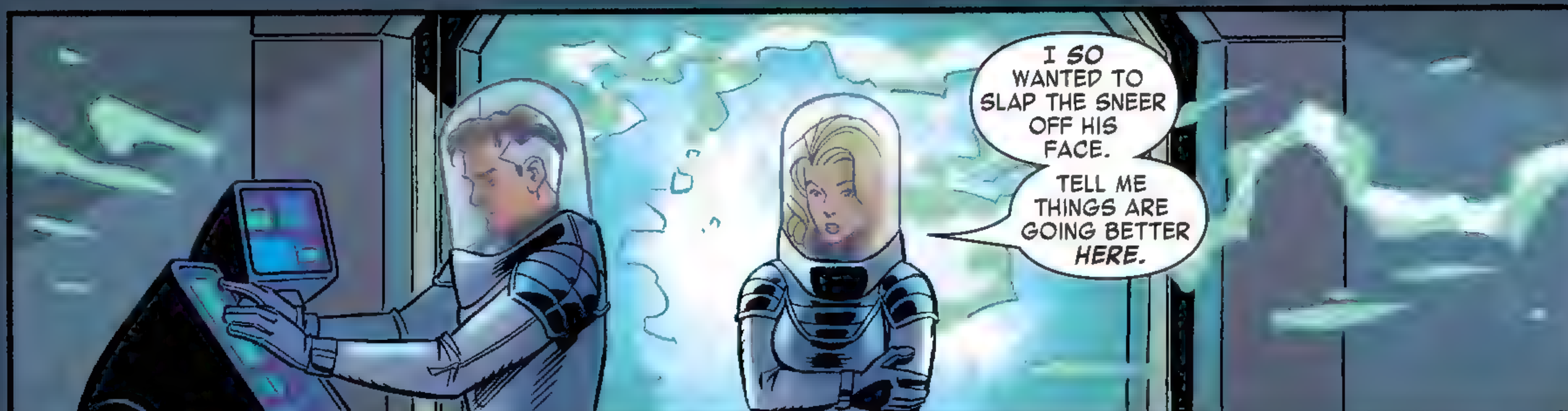


"AND SO WENT THE  
REST OF THE DAY.  
ALICIA AND I DID  
OUR LEVEL-BEST  
TO SHOW GALEN AS  
MUCH OF THE MAGIC  
OF NEW YORK LIFE  
AS WE COULD IN  
ONE AFTERNOON--



"--BUT EVERYWHERE WE  
WENT, GALEN SEEMED  
TO FOCUS ONLY ON  
SOCIETY AT ITS MOST  
BROKEN--ALMOST AS  
IF HE WERE LOOKING  
FOR THINGS TO BE  
CONTEMPTUOUS OF."









WHY, YOU ARROGANT--

SUE!

BECAUSE, GALEN, I WANT MORE.

I WANT SUCCESS.

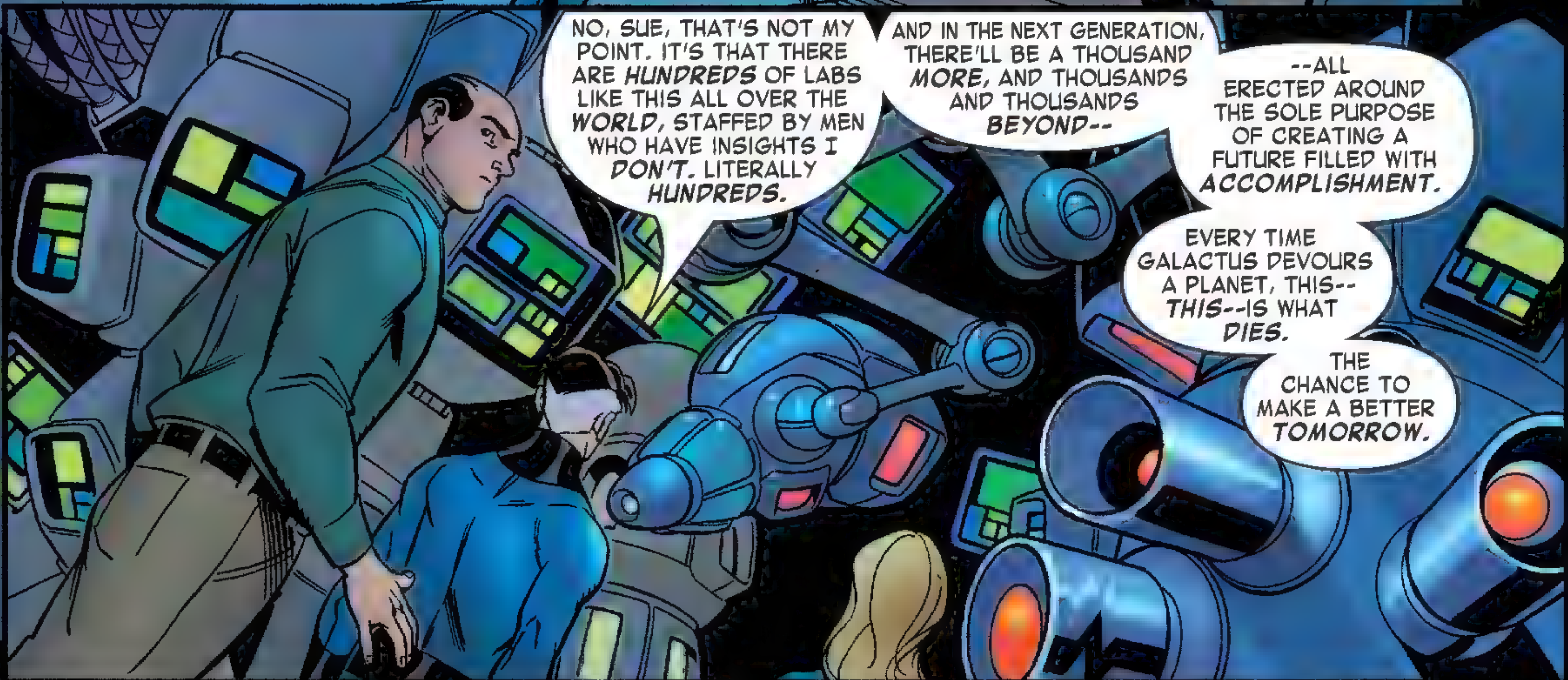
IT'S A COMMON TRAIT AMONG *MOST* OF THE RACES WE'VE ENCOUNTERED IN OUR VOYAGES:

AMBITION.

A NATURAL INCLINATION TO STRIVE FOR ACHIEVEMENT AND BETTERMENT.

LOOK AROUND YOU. ALL MY WORK HERE? ALL THESE INVENTIONS?

THEY'RE AT THE *CUTTING* EDGE OF KNOWLEDGE, GALEN.



NO, SUE, THAT'S NOT MY POINT. IT'S THAT THERE ARE *HUNDREDS* OF LABS LIKE THIS ALL OVER THE *WORLD*, STAFFED BY MEN WHO HAVE INSIGHTS I *DON'T*. LITERALLY *HUNDREDS*.

AND IN THE NEXT GENERATION, THERE'LL BE A *THOUSAND* MORE, AND *THOUSANDS* AND *THOUSANDS* *BEYOND--*

--ALL ERECTED AROUND THE SOLE PURPOSE OF CREATING A FUTURE FILLED WITH *ACCOMPLISHMENT*.

EVERY TIME GALACTUS DEVOURS A PLANET, THIS-- *THIS--IS* WHAT *DIES*.

THE CHANCE TO MAKE A *BETTER* TOMORROW.



GALEN?

WHERE DID HE--?





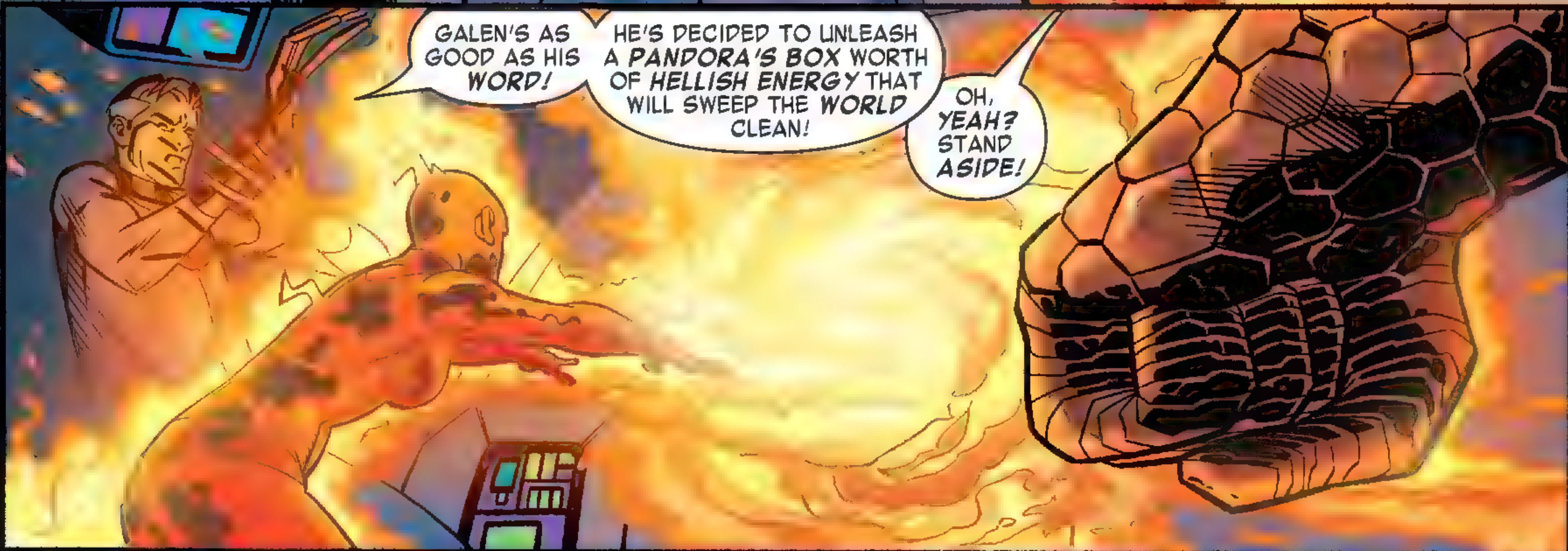
GALEN,  
YOU MANIAC,  
NO!

HE'S ALREADY  
CHANGED THE  
ACCESS  
CODE!

THIS IS MY FAULT!  
IT WAS MY IDEA TO  
BRING HIM TO EARTH,  
AND NOW SIX BILLION  
LIVES ARE AT--

GALEN,  
IN THE NAME  
OF HEAVEN,  
STOP!

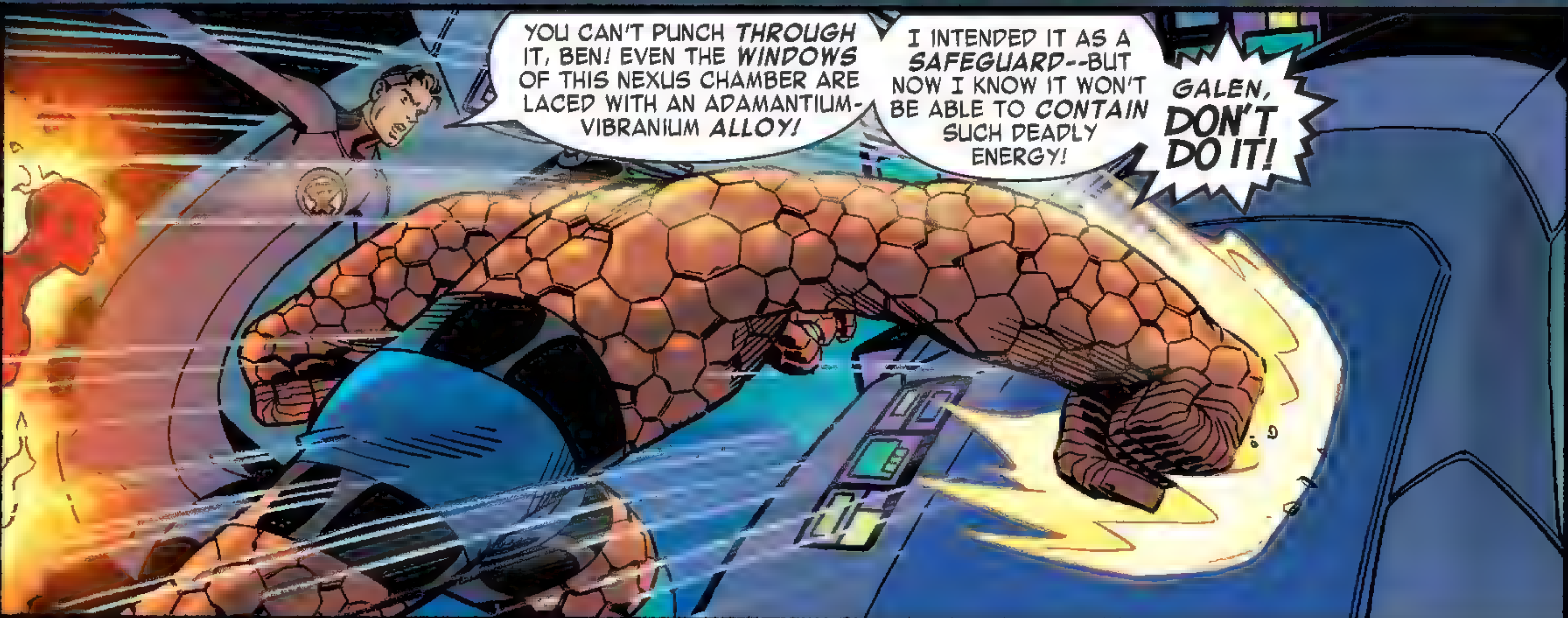
WHAT'S ALL TH'  
COMMOTION?



GALEN'S AS  
GOOD AS HIS  
WORD!

HE'S DECIDED TO UNLEASH  
A PANDORA'S BOX WORTH  
OF HELLISH ENERGY THAT  
WILL SWEEP THE WORLD  
CLEAN!

OH,  
YEAH?  
STAND  
ASIDE!

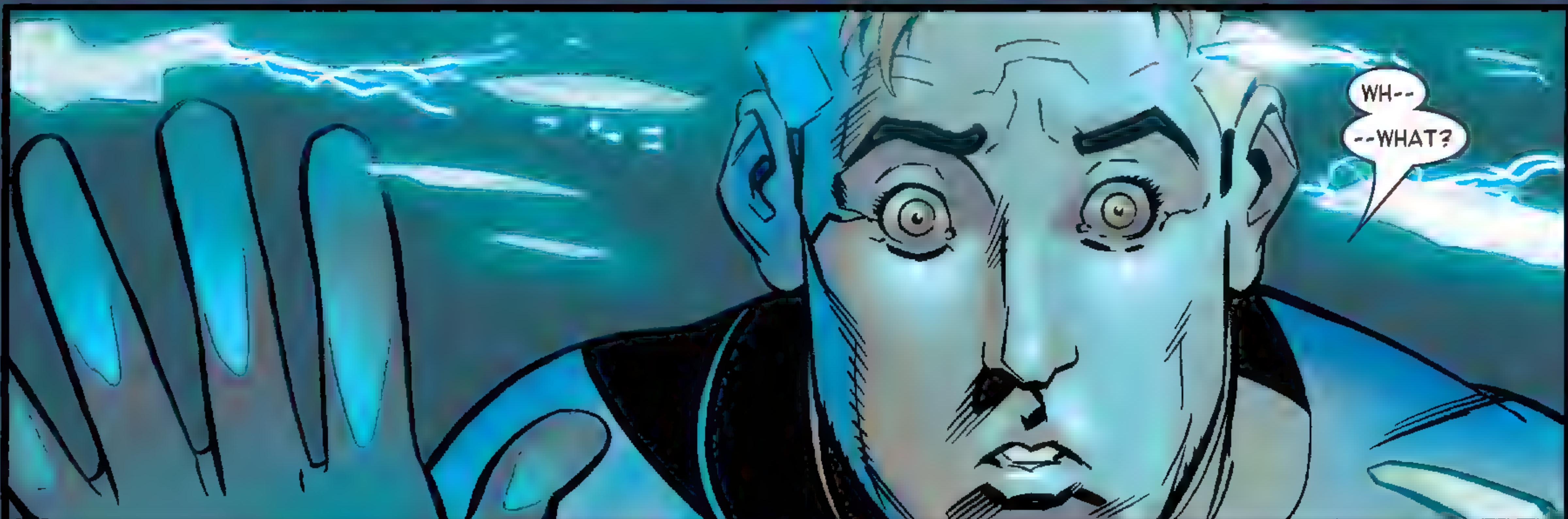


YOU CAN'T PUNCH THROUGH  
IT, BEN! EVEN THE WINDOWS  
OF THIS NEXUS CHAMBER ARE  
LACED WITH AN ADAMANTIUM-  
VIBRANIUM ALLOY!

I INTENDED IT AS A  
SAFEGUARD--BUT  
NOW I KNOW IT WON'T  
BE ABLE TO CONTAIN  
SUCH DEADLY  
ENERGY!

GALEN,  
DON'T  
DO IT!







YOU HAVE ONLY YOURSELVES TO THANK. YOU'VE ALL **SPOKEN** OF IT **REPEATEDLY** IN YOUR OWN WAY, AND ONCE I REALIZED WHAT I WAS LOOKING AT, I SAW IT **EVERYWHERE**:

THE INDOMITABLE SPIRIT OF THE **HUMANOID ORDER**.

THE INABILITY OF MANKIND TO **SURRENDER** BEFORE THE LOCKSTEP MARCH OF A **HOPELESS FUTURE**.

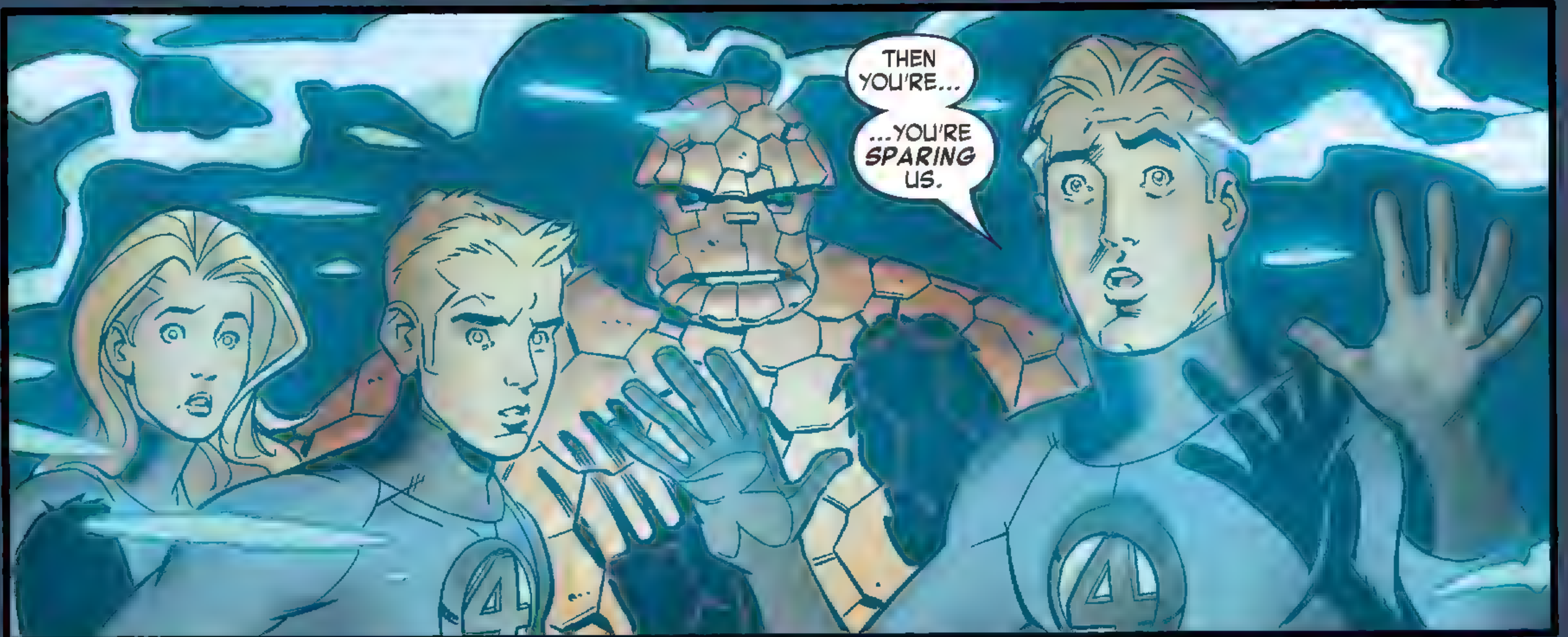
EVEN THE WEAKEST, MOST **POWERLESS** AMONG YOU UNDERSTANDS THE FIERCE NEED TO FIGHT BACK THE DARKNESS OF **ENTROPY** WITH EVERY **BREATH**, RICHARDS. THAT MUCH HAS BECOME **CLEAR** TO ME.

THAT, MORE THAN ANYTHING, IS WHAT I RECOGNIZE WITHIN THE BEINGS OF THIS UNIVERSE--

--AND WHO AM **I** TO EXTINGUISH IN YOU THAT WHICH LIES WITHIN **MYSELF**?







THEN  
YOU'RE...  
...YOU'RE  
SPARING  
US.



I WILLFULLY EXILE  
MYSELF INTO THIS  
DIMENSION BEYOND,  
YES.

SO LONG  
AS I EXIST, THE  
SOUL OF GALACTUS  
WILL STOP AT **NOTHING**  
TO LOCATE ME. WILL IT  
SOMEDAY FIND ME EVEN  
**HERE?** PERHAPS.

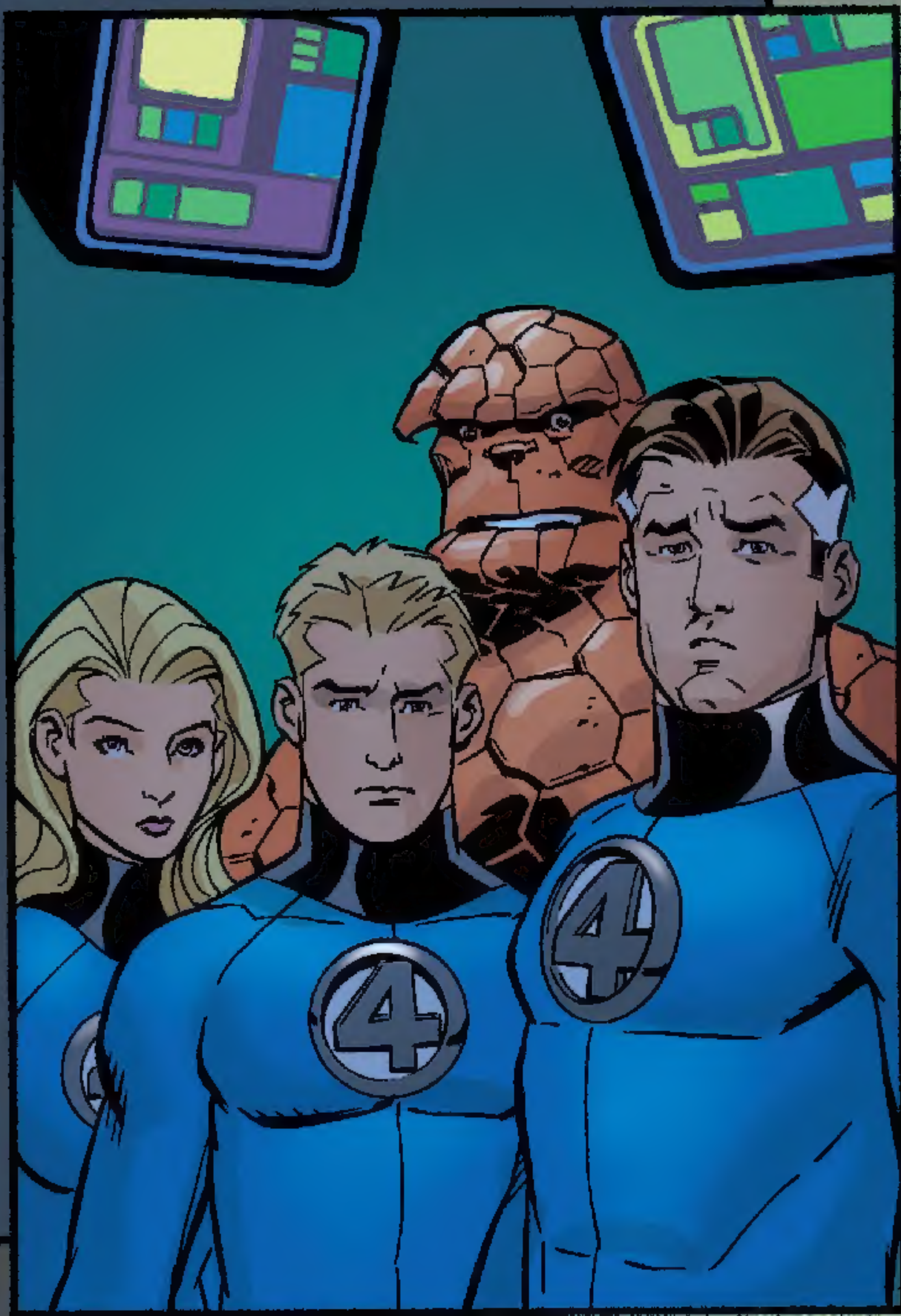
BUT AT  
LEAST MY ACTIONS  
THIS DAY WILL  
PROVIDE A RESPITE  
FROM GALACTUS'S  
WRATH IN THIS  
UNIVERSE...

...OR, AT  
LEAST, GIVE ITS  
INHABITANTS THE BEST  
OPPORTUNITY TO FIND A  
**SOLUTION** TO THE FINALITY  
THAT IS GALACTUS...  
SOMETHING I HAVE EVERY  
**CONFIDENCE** THEY  
WILL EVENTUALLY  
**DO.**

AFTER  
ALL...THAT  
IS THEIR  
**NATURE.**







HE'S RIGHT. WE DON'T GIVE UP.

THERE'S ONE LAST LOOSE END FROM THIS ADVENTURE LEFT TO TIE. FOLLOW ME.

AH. THE *SWAPPAGE*. HEY, REED, SUE AND I WERE TALKING, AND... WELL, IT MAKES SENSE IT DIDN'T COME UP *BEFORE*, WHAT WITH THE WHOLE "RACE TO SAVE WORLDS" PRIORITY AND ALL...

...BUT... COULD I... MAYBE SWAP INSTEAD WITH... Y'KNOW...

WHO? ME? *F'RGIT IT*, BICHEAD. 'COURSE, IT COULD ONLY IMPROVE YER LOOKS, BUT--

--BUT BEN AND I ALREADY HAD THIS ARGUMENT. HE KNOWS WE ONLY HAVE ENOUGH MATERIAL FOR ONE MORE *EXCHANGE*, SO YOU CAN FILL IN THE *REST* OF THE SCREAMING MATCH *YOURSELF*.

SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT MY *PIGHEADED BEST FRIEND* WON'T LET ANY OF US TAKE THAT HIT FOR HIM.

TRUST ME, I TRIED TO CONVINCE HIM. I EVEN CONSIDERED *ANESTHETIZING* HIM--

YOU W/ WHAT ARMY? JUST FLIP TH' *SWITCH* 'FORE I CHANGE MY MIND, OKAY?







HEY!  
SPARKLY!

FUNNY, I  
DON'T REMEMBER  
IT BEING **SPARKLY**  
**BEFORE--!**



THESE CALIBRATIONS  
ARE OFF? BUT-- WAIT!  
OF COURSE!

I HATE  
WHEN YOU SAY  
THAT! WHAT  
NOW?

THERE MUST  
STILL BE A TRACE OF **POWER**  
**COSMIC** IN JOHNNY'S **CELLULAR**  
**STRUCTURE--NOT ENOUGH TO**  
**DETECT, BUT ENOUGH TO FOUL THE--**



SIS, ARE YOU  
OKAY?

SHE'S ALL  
RIGHT, KID! YOU?  
DID THE PROCESS  
TAKE?

TRY  
USING YOUR  
POWERS--BOTH  
OF YOU!

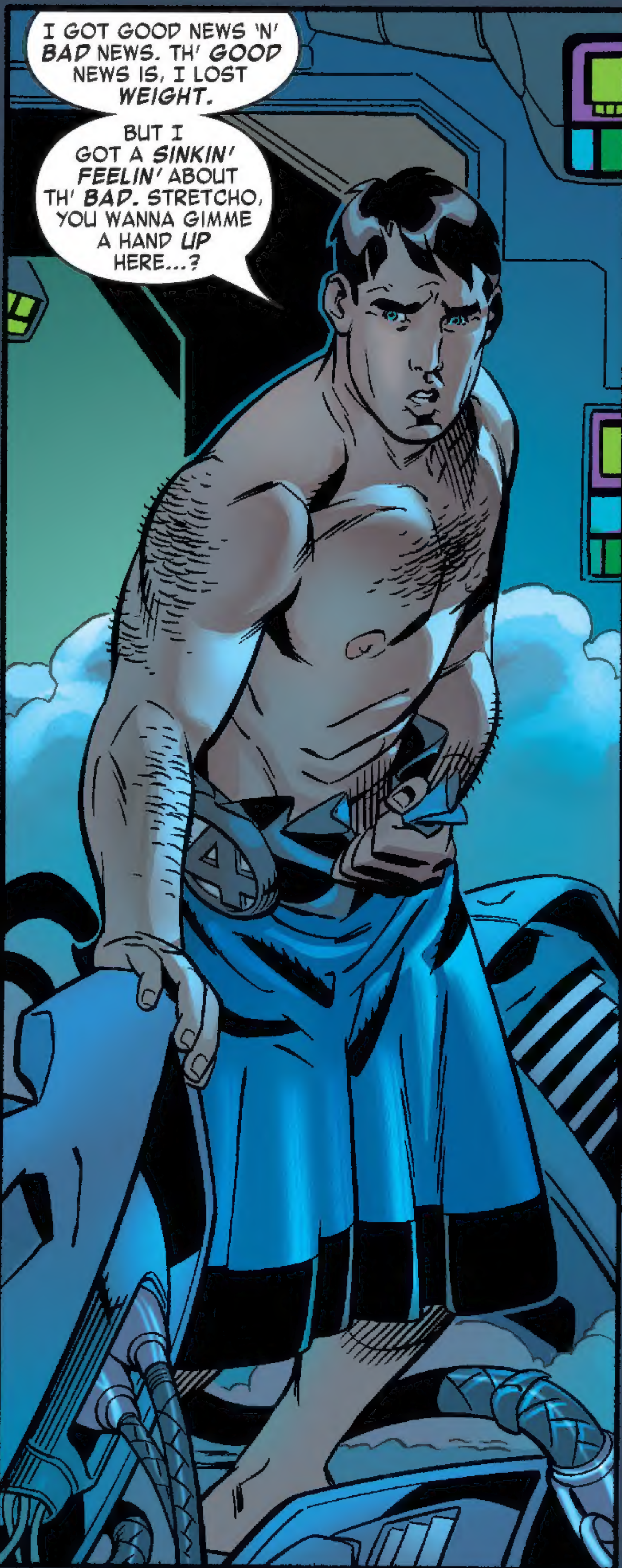




I AM TRYING! I CAN'T MAKE ANYTHING HAPPEN!

NO FIRE, NO FIELDS, NO NOTHIN'!

HANG ON. I C'N TOP THAT.



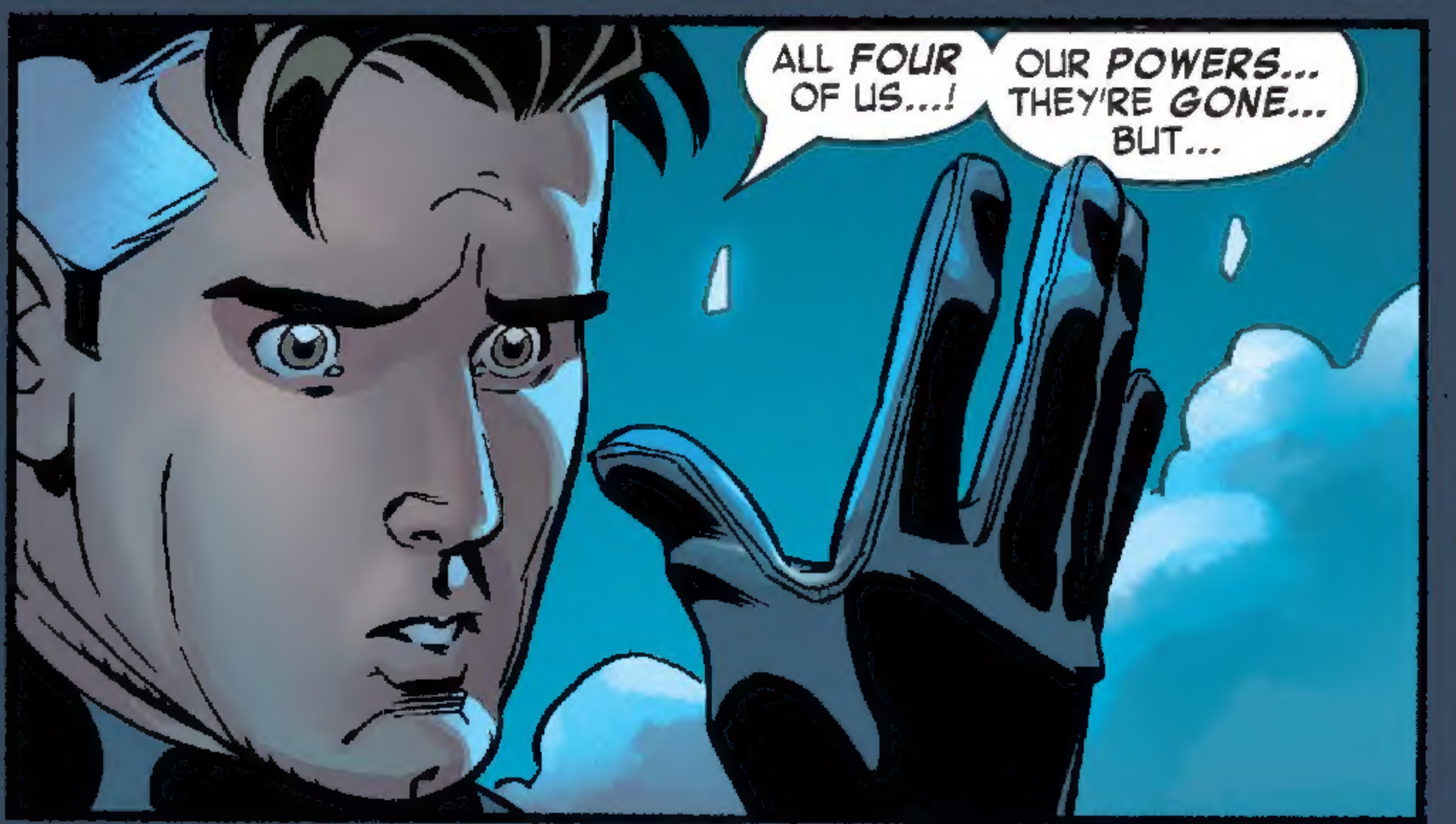
I GOT GOOD NEWS 'N' BAD NEWS. TH' GOOD NEWS IS, I LOST WEIGHT.

BUT I GOT A SINKIN' FEELIN' ABOUT TH' BAD. STRETCHO, YOU WANNA GIMME A HAND UP HERE...?



CERTAINLY, BEN. I--  
--I--

UH-HUH. I FIGGERED AS MUCH.



ALL FOUR OF US...!

OUR POWERS... THEY'RE GONE... BUT...



...BUT GONE WHERE?



